

EXHIBIT 6 HUH
DATE 2-6-09
HB 325

February 6, 2009

Representative Arlene Becker, Chair
House Human Services Committee
Montana State House of Representatives
PO Box 200400
Helena, MT 59620-0400

Madam Chair and Members of the Committee:

For the record, my name is Mark Rumans, MD. I am the Physician in Chief of Billings Clinic. I would like to be listed on the record as a supporter of HB325 with the bill sponsor's recommended amendments. This legislation allows the physicians at Billings Clinic to offer the full evidence-based menu of screening in which to recommend to our patients how best to be screened based on guidelines for colorectal cancer.

In Montana, there were an estimated 520 new colorectal cancer cases and an estimated 160 colorectal cancer related deaths in 2008. Colorectal cancer is the third most commonly diagnosed cancer and the third most common cause of cancer death in the United States. While these numbers are tragic and staggering, we know that up to 90% of these deaths would have been prevented if the American Cancer Society colon cancer screening guidelines were followed. Many individuals who have colon cancer often have no symptoms so screening is critical to the early detection and treatment of this disease yet less than half the people who are eligible for screening receive it.

As you well know, screening and early detection saves lives. The lack of health insurance coverage availability for these life-saving screenings is a major barrier in our state. Twenty-six states and the District of Columbia have adopted colon cancer screening mandate legislation, and since passage these states are making huge strides in reducing the number of colon-cancer related deaths.

As a practicing gastroenterologist, I have personally seen many instances where patients, without symptoms, have come in for screening and have had early cancers detected and their lives have been saved. We at Billings Clinic whole heartedly support this measure.

Thank you for keeping decisions between providers and their patients. Thank you for your consideration of HB325. Please feel free to contact me directly if you have any questions.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mark C. Rumans, MD, MMM
Physician in Chief
Billings Clinic

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